



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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To: DSD's, District Manager, CDD and All Field Office Managers
(Attention - District/Regional and Field Office FMO's)

From: DSD, Support Services

Subject: Official Fire Weather Forecasts for FY-2004

The California Wildfire Coordinating Group (CWCG) has been working to establish a coordinated effort for development and distribution of Official Fire Weather Forecasts for the 2004 fire season within California. The California Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is a participating member of the CWCG and has been involved with this effort. The CWCG has worked closely with the National Weather Service (NWS) over the past several years as the NWS transitioned toward its new fire weather program. Since the transition, which occurred January 2, 2003, the ten NWS offices in California began issuing Fire Weather Forecasts, Fire Weather Watches, Red Flag Warnings, and National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) trend forecast.

Currently, the Redding and Riverside Fire Weather Centers (FWC) are issuing daily forecasts in order to provide the best possible service to the field. **These forecasts will be used by California BLM field offices as the fire weather forecast of record** since they are assimilated from numerous NWS forecasts and represent the seamless product that BLM dispatch personnel need to communicate to the field by radio, on a daily basis. The FWCs will provide site-specific forecasts for prescribed burns, while the NWS will provide site-specific forecasts for wildfires. The FWCs will not issue Fire Weather Watches or Red Flag Warnings (as these products are the responsibility of the NWS); however they will be included in the FWCs forecasts and products. The daily forecast can be found on the FWCs web pages at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/fire/north/fwz> for North Ops and <http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/fire/south/fwz> for south Ops.

California BLM units that receive forecasts from only one NWS office, and are currently satisfied with the forecasts can continue to utilize that NWS office. California BLM units will coordinate with their respective FWC on the decision to use the NWS forecasts. California BLM units will coordinate with their FWC for prescribed fire due to air quality issues.

The CWCG is continuing discussions with the NWS about the California Fire Weather Program. If you have questions or comments about the FWC products, contact Chris Fontana at (530) 226-2730 for North Ops or Ron Hamilton at (909) 276-6520 for South Ops.

Signed by:
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